

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 3-6-09  
SB 89



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<http://www.medamembers.org>

March 5, 2009

TO: Chair Bill Wilson and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) represents over 200 professionals who work for local economic development organizations across the state of Montana. We are professional "lead" economic developers, business specialists, government employees, and staff members of affiliated non-profit organizations which promote and foster economic development activities in Montana.

MEDA strongly supports SB 89 which eliminates the sunset for the new worker training program and pave the way for potential future funding of this key economic development program.

The leadership of MEDA formed a review committee and performed an analysis on each of our key economic development programs. Performance measurements for the New Worker Training Program demonstrate this is an extremely successful program that generates far more funding for the state than it expends. Total dollars awarded by the program since 2006 were just over eight million. Leveraged funds for that same time period totaled almost 240 million. In addition, the annual estimate of return to the state general fund is over \$4 million per year.

In practical terms, the New Worker Training Program is directly responsible for the creation of 2,351 jobs since 2006. Montana continues to struggle with low wages and under-trained workers. This program provides an essential incentive for new businesses to locate to Montana. State-supported worker training programs are among the incentives most important to expanding or relocating businesses. In addition, this program provides existing businesses with essential support for new worker training that allows them to expand their business in Montana without needing to leave the State.

The members of MEDA strongly support this program and encourage your support.

Sincerely,

Jim Davison, President  
MEDA

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